

**(B) AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims in accordance with the following complete listing of all claims in the application:

**Claim 1 (currently amended):** A drilling fluid comprising:

- (a) an aqueous liquid;
- (b) one or more viscosity agents; and
- (c) one or more surfactants having HLB numbers equal to or greater than approximately 7; and
- (d) emulsified bituminous material.

**Claim 2 (cancelled):**

**Claim 3 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, wherein the emulsified bituminous material derives from cuttings produced in the process of drilling through oil sand.

**Claim 4 (currently amended):** The drilling fluid of ~~Claim 2~~ Claim 1, wherein the concentration of emulsified oil or bitumen is in the range from 0.1 to 250 kilograms per cubic meter of drilling fluid.

**Claim 5 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, wherein the aqueous liquid comprises water.

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**Claim 6 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, wherein the one or more viscosity agents are selected from the group consisting of polyanionic cellulose, xanthan gum, clay, and starch.

**Claim 7 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 6, wherein the clay is bentonite.

**Claim 8 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, wherein the concentration of the one or more viscosity agents is within the range from 0.1 to 40 kilograms per cubic meter of drilling fluid.

**Claim 9 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, wherein the one or more surfactants having HLB numbers equal to or greater than approximately 7 are selected from the group consisting of carboxylate salts, sulfonides, sulphates, phosphates, polyethoxylate ether, alkylphenol ethoxylates, alcohol ethoxylates, fatty acid ethoxylates, ethoxylated alkanolamide, alkyl ether phosphate, alkyl benzene sulfonates, ethoxylated fatty acids, castor oil ethoxylates, glycerol esters, ethylene oxide propylene oxide-block copolymers, nonylphenoxypoly (ethyleneoxy) ethanol, imidazolines, betaines, propionates, and amphotacetates.

**Claim 10 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, wherein the one or more surfactants having HLB numbers equal to or greater than approximately 7 include an anionic surfactant.

**Claim 11 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, wherein the one or more surfactants having HLB numbers greater than 7 include a nonionic surfactant.

**Claim 12 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, wherein the total concentration of the one or more surfactants having HLB numbers equal to or greater than approximately 7 is in the range from 0.5 to 25 kilograms per cubic meter of drilling fluid.

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**Claim 13 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, further comprising one or more polymer materials.

**Claim 14 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 13, wherein the one or more polymer materials are selected from the group consisting of xanthan gum, polyanionic cellulose, modified starch, and non-modified starch.

**Claim 15 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 13, wherein the concentration of polymer materials is in the range from 0.1 to 25 kilograms per cubic meter of drilling fluid.

**Claim 16 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, further comprising one or more alkaline materials.

**Claim 17 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 16, wherein the one or more alkaline materials are selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide and sodium carbonate.

**Claim 18 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 16, wherein the total concentration of the one or more alkaline materials is in the range from 0.5 to 5 kilograms per cubic meter of drilling fluid.

**Claim 19 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, further comprising a carrier oil.

**Claim 20 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 19, wherein the concentration of the carrier oil is in the range from 0.1 to 75 kilograms per cubic meter of drilling fluid.

**Claim 21 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, further comprising one or more weighting materials.

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**Claim 22 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 21, wherein the one or more weighting materials are selected from the group consisting of barite, hematite, and calcium carbonate.

**Claim 23 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 21, wherein the concentration of the one or more weighting materials is in the range from 0.1 to 300 kilograms per cubic meter of drilling fluid.

**Claim 24 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 1, further comprising one or more defoaming agents.

**Claim 25 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 24, wherein the one or more defoaming agents are selected from the group consisting of alcohol-based and silicone-based defoamers.

**Claim 26 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 24, wherein the total concentration of defoaming agents is in the range from 0.1 to 15 kilograms per cubic meter of drilling fluid.

**Claim 27 (original):** A process for making an emulsified drilling fluid containing emulsified oil or bitumen from oil sand cuttings, said process comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a primary drilling fluid comprising an aqueous liquid, a viscosity agent, and one or more surfactants having HLB numbers equal to or greater than approximately 7; and
- (b) mixing the primary drilling fluid with cuttings produced by drilling through oil sand formations containing oil or bitumen;

wherein said surfactants are effective to emulsify the oil or bitumen from the cuttings, and the emulsified oil or bitumen becomes substantially uniformly dispersed within the primary drilling fluid, thereby forming the emulsified drilling fluid.

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**Claim 28 (original):** The process of Claim 27, wherein the step of mixing the primary drilling fluid with cuttings is accomplished by circulating the primary drilling fluid through the annular space of the wellbore of a well being drilled through an oil sand formation, such that cuttings from the oil sand formation become mixed into the primary drilling fluid.

**Claim 29 (original):** The process of Claim 27, wherein the primary drilling fluid includes one or more polymers.

**Claim 30 (original):** The process of Claim 27, wherein the primary drilling fluid includes one or more alkaline materials.

**Claim 31 (original):** The process of Claim 27, wherein the primary drilling fluid includes a carrier oil.

**Claim 32 (original):** The process of Claim 27, wherein the primary drilling fluid includes one or more weighting materials.

**Claim 33 (original):** The process of Claim 27, wherein the primary drilling fluid includes one or more defoaming agents.

**Claim 34 (currently amended):** A drilling fluid comprising:

- (a) an aqueous liquid;
- (b) one or more viscosity agents; and
- (c) a carrier oil having solvent properties; and
- (d) emulsified bituminous material.

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**Claim 35 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 34, wherein the aqueous liquid comprises water.

**Claim 36 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 34, wherein the one or more viscosity agents include a clay.

**Claim 37 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 36, wherein the clay is bentonite.

**Claim 38 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 34, wherein the concentration of the one or more viscosity agents is in the range from 10 to 40 kilograms per cubic meter of drilling fluid.

**Claim 39 (original):** The drilling fluid of Claim 34, wherein the concentration of carrier oil is in the range from 1.0 to 75 kilograms per cubic meter of drilling fluid.

**Claim 40 (new):** The drilling fluid of Claim 34, wherein the emulsified bituminous material derives from cuttings produced in the process of drilling through oil sand.